



**Policy Number:** 300.3

**Policy Title:** Disability Services for Students

**Subject:** Section 300 – Student Affairs

**Date Adopted:** October 2, 2009

**Date(s) Revised:** September 14, 2012

**Approved by:**   
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Daniel J. Bingham  
Dean/CEO  
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**POLICY STATEMENT:**

Helena College University of Montana is committed to providing students access to higher education through the delivery of reasonable accommodations and services to students with disabilities as required by law in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as amended (2008).

Students, faculty, and staff are required to understand this policy and utilize its procedures in order to request, authorize, and/or implement reasonable accommodations. A student's failure to comply with the policy and procedures outlined may result in the delay or denial of services. Accommodation requests and services are not retroactive.

All Helena College policies shall adhere to and be consistent with relevant federal and state laws, rules, and regulations; with Board of Regents' policies and procedures; and with The University of Montana's policies and procedures.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **DEFINITIONS**

The term “disability” means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities, which may include, but is not limited to, seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, learning, reading, thinking, communicating, concentrating, and performing manual tasks. Major life activities also include the functions of major bodily systems.

“Reasonable accommodations” are those adaptations that allow a student with a disability access to an academic program or offering at the college. Accommodations include but are not limited to the provision of interpreters, extended testing time, note takers, recorded lectures, etc. Accommodations are not considered reasonable if they pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others; if they change the essential elements of the curriculum; or if they pose an undue financial or administrative burden.

### **PROCEDURES FOR SEEKING ACCOMMODATIONS**

In order to initiate the accommodation process, the following procedures must be followed:

The student must contact the Office of Disability Services, fill out a request for services, and provide documentation of the disability. As appropriate, documentation should provide the following:

- A clearly stated diagnosis of the disability
- The student’s functional limitation in an academic environment
- Signature, printed name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator
- Date of the evaluation

Requests for accommodations should be made in a timely manner. Generally speaking, requests that are made three weeks prior to the date needed will ensure appropriate delivery of services, except for long-term interpreting needs.

Upon receipt of documentation, the Director of Disability Services will review the documentation with the student and appropriate accommodations will be discussed for the upcoming academic term.

Students may pick up a letter of accommodation prior to the beginning of the term from the Office of Disability Services. It is the student’s responsibility to deliver the letter of accommodation to the instructor of each class in which accommodations are needed. The student is encouraged to discuss with the instructor how each accommodation will be implemented in the class. Students taking online classes only should review the Disability Services at [http://umhelenahelena.edu/campus\\_facilities/accessibility.aspx](http://umhelenahelena.edu/campus_facilities/accessibility.aspx) for clarification on obtaining the letters of accommodation.

The Director of Disability Services will work with faculty and staff throughout the College in order to assist with how accommodations may be implemented in the classroom. It is not recommended that faculty offer accommodations to students without documentation or consultation with the Office of Disability Services.

Guidelines for the provision of interpreters, service animals on campus, course substitutions, more detailed documentation requirements, and other general information may be found on the College’s Disability Services web page. An online request for services form may also be found on the same web page.

### **DISPUTE OF ACCOMMODATION DECISIONS OR PROCESS**

Students who wish to challenge any part of the accommodations process may do so under the procedures for student complaints outlined in the College’s Student Handbook.

**DISCLOSURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

Student disclosure of a disability is voluntary. Data about students with disabilities is collected at various points of a student's entrance into the College for the purpose of reporting demographic information, but it is voluntary. Helena College considers disability-related information as confidential material and will protect it in accordance with the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA). The information will not be released except in response to a student's request or written authorization, as needed to assist a student with an educationally related issue, or as permitted under certain circumstances in accordance with FERPA guidelines.